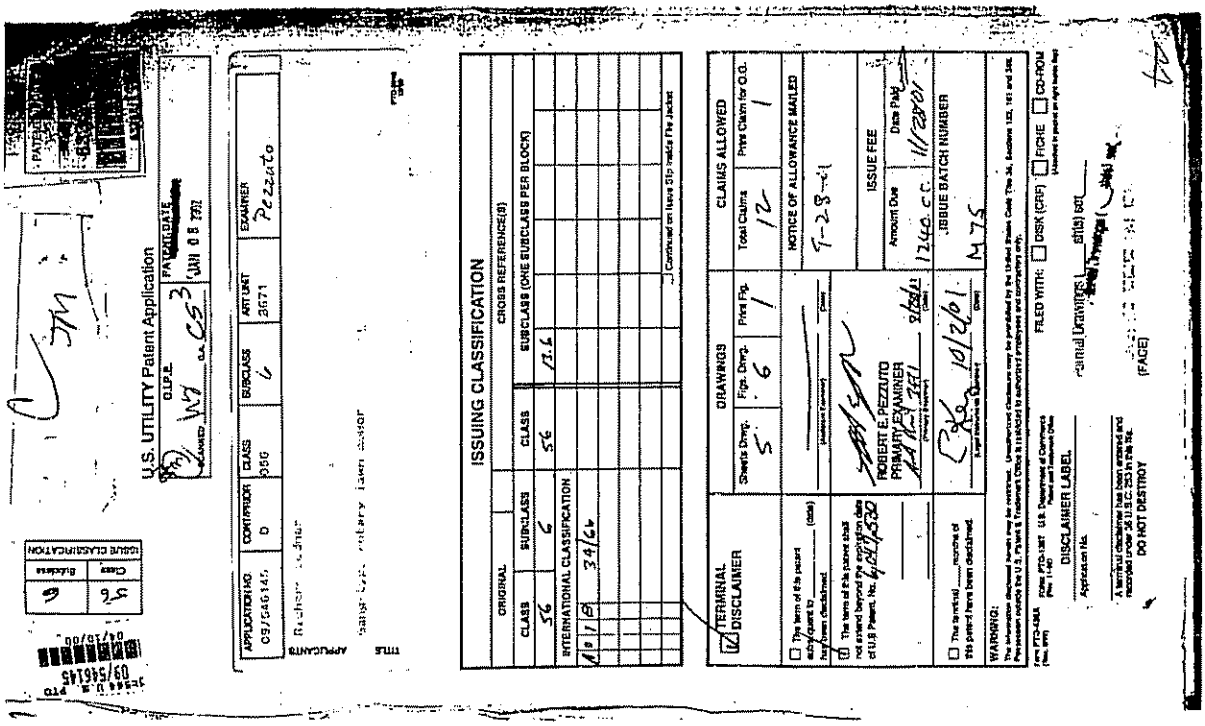
EXHIBIT 11
(part 1)



U.S. UTILITY Patent Application

PATENT DATE

ISSUE CLASSIFICATION

APPLICATION NO.	CONFIRMER	CLASS	SUBCLASS	ART UNIT	EXAMINER
09/546145	0	356	6	2671	Rezzato

APPLICANTS

TITLE

ISSUING CLASSIFICATION

ORIGINAL		CROSS REFERENCE(S)	
CLASS	SUBCLASS	CLASS	SUBCLASS (ONE SUBCLASS PER BLOCK)
356	6	356	13.1

INTERNATIONAL CLASSIFICATION

G 1 B 34/47

Continued on Issue Slip Inside File Jacket

TERMINAL DISCLAIMER

DRAWINGS: Sheets Drwg. 5 | Figs. Drwg. 6 | Print Fig. 1

CLAIMS ALLOWED: Total Claims 12 | Print Claim for O.G. 1

NOTICE OF ALLOWANCE MAILED 7-28-01

ISSUE FEE: Amount Due 1240.00 | Date Paid 11/28/01

ISSUE BATCH NUMBER M75

ROBERT E. PEZZUTO PRIMARY EXAMINER

DISCLAIMER LABEL

FILED WITH: DISK (CRF) FICHE CD-ROM

(FACE)

DO NOT DESTROY

EXHIBIT 11

PATENT APPLICATION SERIAL NO._____

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE
FEE RECORD SHEET

04/13/2000 ESELEMON 00000018 09546145
01 FC:101 $39.00 OP

PTO-1556
(5/87)

UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20231

Bib Data Sheet

CONFIRMATION NO. 2855

SERIAL NUMBER	FILING DATE	CLASS	GROUP ART UNIT	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.
09/546,145	04/10/2000 RULE	056	3671	7016R-000015/COA

APPLICANTS
Richard D. Bednar, Lake Mills, WI;

** CONTINUING DATA **********
THIS APPLICATION IS A CON OF 08/794,141 02/03/1997 PAT 6,047,530

** FOREIGN APPLICATIONS **********

IF REQUIRED, FOREIGN FILING LICENSE GRANTED ** 09/13/2000

Foreign Priority claimed	STATE OR COUNTRY	SHEETS DRAWING	TOTAL CLAIMS	INDEPENDENT CLAIMS
35 USC 119 (a-d) conditions met Verified and Acknowledged	WI	5	1	1

ADDRESS
Harness Dickey & Pierce PLC
PO Box 828
Bloomfield Hills , MI 48303

TITLE
Gang-type rotary lawn mower with rear roller

FILING FEE RECEIVED	FEES: Authority has been given in Paper No. _____ to charge/credit DEPOSIT ACCOUNT No. _____ for following:	
690		☐ All Fees ☐ 1.10 Fees (Filing) ☐ 1.17 Fees (Processing Ext. of time) ☐ 1.18 Fees (Issue) ☐ Other ☐ Credit

NEW, CONTINUATION, DIVISIONAL OR CONTINUATION-IN-PART APPLICATION UNDER 37 C.F.R. §1.53(b)

Attorney Docket No. 7016R-000015/COA

Express Mail Label No. EJ948538840US

Date April 10, 2000

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Hon. Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks
Washington, D. C. 20231

Sir:

Transmitted herewith for filing under 37 C.F.R §1.53(b) is a patent application for

GANG-TYPE ROTARY LAWN MOWER

identified by: [ ] First named inventor
or [X] Attorney Docket No. (see above)

1. Type of Application

[ ] This application is a new (non-continuing) application.

[X] This application is a [X] continuation / [ ] divisional / [ ] continuation-in-part of prior application No. 08/794,141. Amend the specification by inserting before the first line the sentence:

--This is a continuation of United States patent application No. 08/794,141, filed February 3, 1997.--

[X] The entire disclosure of the prior application, from which a copy of the oath or declaration is supplied, is considered part of the disclosure of the accompanying application and is hereby incorporated by reference therein.

If for some reason applicant has not requested a sufficient extension of time in the parent application, and/or has not paid a sufficient fee for any necessary response in the parent application and/or for the extension of time necessary to prevent the abandonment of the parent application prior to the filing of this application, please consider this as a Request for an Extension for the required time period and/or authorization to charge our Deposit Account No. 08-0750 for any fee that may be due. THIS FORM IS BEING FILED IN TRIPLICATE: one copy for this application; one copy for use in connection with the Deposit Account (if applicable); and one copy for the above-mentioned parent application (if any extension of time is necessary).

2. Contents of Application

a. Specification of 21 pages;
[ ] A microfiche computer program (Appendix);
[ ] A nucleotide and/or amino acid sequence submission;

[ ] Because the enclosed application is in a non-English language, a verified English translation [ ] is enclosed [ ] will be filed.

[X] Cancel original claims 2-20 of the prior application before calculating the filing fee. (At least one original independent claim must be retained for filing date purposes.)

b. [X] Drawings on 5 sheets;

HARNESS, DICKEY & PIERCE, P.L.C.
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April 10, 2000

Hon. Commissioner of Patents
and Trademarks
Washington, D.C. 20231

Sir:

EXPRESS MAILING CERTIFICATE

Applicant: Richard D. Bednar

Serial No.: To be designated

For: GANG-TYPE ROTARY LAWN MOWER

Docket: 7016R-000015/COA

Attorney: David P. Ulykanski

"Express Mail" Mailing Label Number EJ948538840US

Date of Deposit April 10, 2000

I hereby certify and verify that the accompanying return postcard, Check for $690.00; 3-page Transmittal letter (in triplicate); a copy of 21-page patent application with attached (Signed) Declaration and Power of Attorney, Drawings on 5 sheets showing Figures 1-8, are being deposited with the United States Postal Service "Express Mail Post Office To Addressee" service under 37 C.F.R. 1.10 on the date indicated above and is (are) addressed to the Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks, Washington, D.C. 20231.

Geraldine A. Pasco

Attorney Docket No. 7016R-000109
Express Mail Label No. EJ 948538840US
Date April 10, 2000

c. [x] A signed Oath/Declaration [x] is enclosed / [ ] will be filed in accordance with 37 C.F.R. §1.53(f).

The enclosed Oath/Declaration is [ ] newly executed / [x] a copy from a prior application under 37 C.F.R. §1.63(d) / [ ] accompanied by a statement requesting the deletion of person(s) not inventors in the continuing application.

d. **Fees**

FILING FEE CALCULATION	Number Filed		Number Extra		Rate		Basic Fee $690.00
Total Claims	1	- 20 =	0	x	$18.00	=	$0.00
Independent Claims	1	- 3 =	0	x	$78.00	=	$0.00
Multiple Dependent Claim(s) Used					$260.00	=	
FILING FEE - NON-SMALL ENTITY							$690.00
FILING FEE - SMALL ENTITY: Reduction by 1/2 [ ] Verified Statement under 37 C.F.R. §1.27 is enclosed. [ ] Verified Statement filed in prior application.							
Assignment Recordal Fee ($40.00)							
37 C.F.R. §1.17(k) Fee (non-English application)							
TOTAL							$690.00

[x] A check is enclosed to cover the calculated fees. The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees that may be required, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 08-0750. A duplicate copy of this document is enclosed.

[ ] The calculated fees will be paid within the time allotted for completion of the filing requirements.

[ ] The calculated fees are to be charged to Deposit Account No. 08-0750. The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees that may be required, or credit any overpayment, to said Deposit Account. A duplicate copy of this document is enclosed.

3. **Priority Information**

[ ] Foreign Priority: Priority based on _____ Application No. _____, filed _____, is claimed.

[ ] A copy of the above referenced priority document [ ] is enclosed / [ ] will be filed in due course, pursuant to 35 U.S.C. §119(a)-(d).

[ ] Provisional Application Priority: Priority based on United States Provisional Application No. ____, filed ____, is claimed under 35 U.S.C. §119(e).

Attorney Docket No. 7016R-000109
Express Mail Label No. EJ948538840US
Date April 10, 2000

4. **Other Submissions**

[ ] A Preliminary Amendment is enclosed.

[ ] An Information Disclosure Statement, ____ sheets of PTO Form 1449, and ____ patent(s)/publications/documents are enclosed.

[ ] A power of attorney

[ ] is submitted [ ] with the new Oath/Declaration.

[ ] is of record in the prior application and [ ] is in the original papers / [ ] a copy is enclosed.

[x] An Assignment of the Invention

[ ] is enclosed with a cover sheet pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §§3.11, 3.28 and 3.31.

[x] is of record in a prior application. The assignment is to Ransomes America Corporation, and is recorded at Reel ____, Frame(s) ____.

[ ] An Establishment of Assignee's Right To Prosecute Application Under 37 C.F.R. §3.73(b), and Power Of Attorney is enclosed.

[x] An Express Mailing Certificate is enclosed.

[x] Other: Return Postcard; a Preliminary Amendment will follow.

Attention is directed to the fact that the correspondence address for this application is:

Harness, Dickey & Pierce, P.L.C.
P.O. Box 828
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(248) 641-1600.

Respectfully,

Date 4/10/00
Harness, Dickey & Pierce, P.L.C.
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David P. Utykanski
Reg. No. 39,052

GANG-TYPE ROTARY LAWN MOWER with rear roller

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

The invention relates to rotary lawn mowers and to gang-type lawn mowers.

Historically, reel mowers have been used to cut golf course roughs. It is generally recognized that rotary mowers are better suited for cutting tall grass, where scalping is not a problem, while reel mowers are better for shorter cutting. A gang of reels can be either attached directly to the frame on which the operator rides, or pulled behind a tractor. Pull-behind or tow-behind rotary gangs are also known. These can be driven either by a power takeoff or by a separate engine. Tow-behind gangs, whether reel or rotary, are generally undesirable for cutting a golf course rough because close trimming is difficult. Thus, rotary mowers have not been used to cut golf course roughs, which require close trimming and the ability to cut undulating terrain at a relatively short length.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The invention provides a gang-type rotary lawn mower suitable for cutting a golf course rough. This is a tremendous improvement over the known prior art, because a rotary mower typically requires substantially less maintenance than a reel mower. The lawn mower has single-spindle cutting decks attached directly to the frame on which the operator rides, with a front row of two or more cutting decks in front of the front wheels, and with a rear row of one or more cutting decks between the front and rear wheels. The invention also provides an improved arrangement for mounting a rotary cutting deck on a lawn mower frame. Each deck is mounted on its own lifting arm so that the deck can move vertically relative to the frame and can pivot relative to the frame about three mutually perpendicular axes.

More particularly, the invention provides a gang-type rotary lawn mower comprising a frame supported by front and rear wheels, an operator's seat mounted on the frame, at least two side-by-side front cutting deck assemblies mounted on the frame in front of the front wheels, and at least one rear cutting deck assembly mounted on the frame behind the front wheels and in front of the rear wheels. Each of the front and rear deck assemblies includes a pair of laterally-spaced, generally vertically-extending side plates, front wheels supporting the side plates for movement over the ground, and a rear roller extending between the side plates and supporting the side plates for movement over the ground. Each deck assembly also includes a single-spindle cutting deck located between the side plates and in front of the roller, the deck being mounted on the side plates such that the height of the deck relative to the ground is adjustable. The roller extends across substantially the entire width of the deck. The roller resists scalping and stripes the grass, both of which are aesthetically desirable.

Each deck assembly is connected to the frame by a generally L-shaped, horizontally-extending lifting arm operable to lift the

deck assembly relative to the frame. Each deck assembly is connected to the frame by its own lifting arm. Each lifting arm has an inner end pivotally connected to the frame. A cross member is mounted on the outer end of the lifting arm for pivotal movement about a generally vertical axis and about a generally horizontal axis extending in the forward-rearward direction. One end of the cross member is connected to one of the deck assembly side plates for pivotal movement about a generally horizontal, laterally-extending axis adjacent the forward ends of the side plates, and the other end of the cross member is connected to the other side plate for pivotal movement about the same axis.

This construction enables the lawn mower to cut the undulating terrain of a golf course rough and to be controlled for close trimming. Also, as mentioned above, the lawn mower requires much less maintenance than the reel mowers historically used to cut a golf course rough.

Other features and advantages of the invention will become apparent to those skilled in the art upon review of the following detailed description, claims and drawings.

DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Fig. 1 is a top plan view of a lawn mower embodying the invention.

Fig. 2 is a perspective view of a cutting deck assembly.

Fig. 3 is a top plan view of the cutting deck assembly.

Fig. 4 is a side elevational view of the cutting deck assembly.

Fig. 5 is a rear elevational view of the cutting deck assembly.

Fig. 6 is a view taken along line 6—6 in Fig. 3.

Before one embodiment of the invention is explained in detail, it is to be understood that the invention is not limited in its application to the details of the construction and the arrangements of components set forth in the following description or illustrated in the drawings. The invention is capable of other embodiments and of being practiced or being carried out in various ways. Also, it is understood that the phraseology and terminology used herein is for the purpose of description and should not be regarded as limiting.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

A lawn mower 10 embodying the invention is illustrated in Fig. 1. Except as described below, the lawn mower 10 is identical to the lawn mower disclosed in U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 08/787,358, filed January 22, 1997, titled "PARALLEL-SERIES FOUR-WHEEL-DRIVE HYDRAULIC CIRCUIT FOR A RIDING LAWN MOWER" and assigned to the assignee hereof. The lawn mower 10 comprises a frame 12 (partially shown in Figs. 2-5) supported by front wheels 14 and rear wheels 16 for movement over the ground. While the illustrated lawn mower 10 is rear-steering and has

four-wheel drive, it should be understood that the invention is applicable to front-steering or two-wheel-drive lawn mowers.

The lawn mower 10 further comprises a power source 18 supported by the frame 12. The power source may be any type known in the art, such as a gasoline-powered, internal-combustion engine. The engine drives a hydraulic pump (not shown) that supplies hydraulic fluid to hydraulic motors (not shown) drivingly connected to the wheels 14 and 16. The lawn mower 10 further comprises an operator's seat 20, and a conventional steering system, including a steering wheel 22, enabling the operator to steer the lawn mower 10. In the illustrated construction, the steering system is hydraulic and is connected to the rear wheels 16 to steer the lawn mower 10.

The lawn mower 10 further comprises front and rear rows 26 and 30, respectively, of cutting deck assemblies 34. More particularly, in the illustrated construction, the lawn mower 10 has three side-by-side front cutting deck assemblies 34 in front of the front wheels 14, and two rear cutting deck assemblies 34 behind the front wheels 14 and in front of the rear wheels 16. As is known in the art, each rear deck assembly 34 is aligned with the gap between two adjacent front deck assemblies 34.

Each of the cutting deck assemblies 34 includes (see Figs. 2-5) a single-spindle mulching deck 38 defining a downwardly opening space 42 (Fig. 4). The deck 38 is located between and supported by a pair of laterally-spaced, generally vertically-extending side plates 46 and 48. The term "lateral" is used

herein to mean the direction from one side of the lawn mower to the other, i.e., perpendicular to the forward-rearward direction. Two front wheels 50 rotate about an axle 54 (Figs. 2 and 3) extending between the side plates 46 and 48 in front of the deck 38, such that each front wheel 50 supports one of the side plates 46 and 48 and the deck 38 for movement over the ground. A rear roller 58 extends between the side plates 46 and 48 and also supports the side plates 46 and 48 and the deck 38 for movement over the ground. The roller 58 is behind the deck 38 and extends across substantially the entire width of the deck 38. The roller 58 resists scalping and stripes the grass.

The deck 38 is mounted on the side plates 46 and 48 such that the height of the deck 38 relative to the ground is adjustable. In the illustrated construction, the deck 38 includes spaced deck plates 66 and 68 (Figs. 3 and 5) extending upwardly adjacent the side plates 46 and 48, respectively. The upper end of each side plate 46 or 48 has thereon (see Fig. 2) generally horizontal, inwardly-extending ears 69 and 70, with the ear 69 adjacent the front of the side plate and the ear 70 adjacent the rear of the side plate. Fixed to the ears 69 and 70 of each side plate 46 or 48 is an elongated plate member 71 having outwardly-extending ears 72 and 73 respectively secured to the ears 69 and 70 by suitable means such as bolts or screws 74. Each side plate 46 or 48 and the corresponding plate member 71 has therein (see Figs. 4 and 6) a series of holes 76. Each of the deck plates 66 and 68 has therein several vertically-spaced

series of holes 78. Bolts 80 extending through holes 76 in the side plates 46 and 48 and in the plate members 71 and through holes 78 in the deck plates 66 and 68 secure the deck 38 to the side plates 46 and 48. The height of the deck 38 is adjusted by changing the holes 78 in the deck plates 66 and 68 and/or the holes in the side plates 46 and 48 and in the plate members 71 through which the bolts 80 extend.

A single spindle 84 (Fig. 4) is mounted for rotation about a generally vertical axis within the space 42 defined by the deck 38. The spindle 84 is driven by a hydraulic motor 88 on top of the deck 38. The above-mentioned pump supplies hydraulic fluid to the motor 88. It should be understood that other means could be used to drive the spindle 84.

A set of cutting blades is mounted on the spindle 84 for rotation therewith. In the illustrated construction, as shown in Figs. 3 and 4, each blade set includes a lower, leading blade 92 and an upper, trailing blade 96. The leading blade 92 has a leading cutting edge and an upwardly angled trailing edge or lift. Preferably, the lift of the leading blade 92 is angled upwardly at an angle of approximately forty-five degrees. The trailing blade 96 has a leading cutting edge for cutting clippings deflected upwardly by the lift of the leading blade 92. The blades are preferably identical to those disclosed in U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 08/787,192, filed January 22, 1997, titled "ROTARY LAWN MOWER MULCHING DECK" and assigned to the

assignee hereof. In alternative embodiments of the invention, different blade arrangements can be employed.

Each of the deck assemblies 34 is mounted on the frame 12 by a generally L-shaped, horizontally-extending lifting arm 112, such that each deck assembly is mounted on its own lifting arm 112. The lifting arm 112 has (see Figs. 2 and 3) a laterally-extending inner leg 116 with an inner end connected to the frame 12 for pivotal movement about a generally horizontal axis 120 extending in the forward-rearward direction. The arm 112 also has an outer leg 124 extending in the forward-rearward direction. A cross member 128 is mounted on the outer end of the outer leg 124 for pivotal movement about a generally vertical axis 132 and about a generally horizontal axis 136 extending in the forward-rearward direction. Each of the opposite, laterally-spaced ends of the cross member 128 has thereon (see Figs. 2, 3, 5 and 6) a downwardly and slightly rearwardly extending arm 140. The lower end of one arm 140 is connected to the side plate 46 for pivotal movement about a generally horizontal, laterally-extending axis 144 adjacent the forward ends of the side plates 46 and 48. The lower end of the other arm 140 is connected to the side plate 48 for pivotal movement about the axis 144.

A hydraulic assembly 148 (partially shown only in Fig. 5) connected between the arm 112 and the frame 12 pivots the arm about the axis 120 for lifting and lowering the deck 38. When the deck is lowered for cutting, the hydraulic assembly allows the lifting arm to "float," thereby allowing the deck 38 to move

vertically relative to the frame 12. The connection of the deck 38 to the arm 112 via the cross member 128 allows the deck 38 to pivot relative to the frame 12 about the three mutually perpendicular axes 132, 136 and 144. This mounting arrangement enables the deck 38 to adjust to undulating terrain, thereby substantially avoiding scaiping.

It should be understood that the lawn mower 10 could have only two or more than three cutting decks in the front row, and only one or more than two cutting decks in the rear row. Also, other arrangements could be used to mount the decks on the frame 12.

Various features of the invention are set forth in the following claims.

CLAIMS

1. A gang-type rotary lawn mower comprising

a frame supported by wheels for movement over the ground,

a power source which is mounted on the frame and which drives at least two of the wheels,

an operator's seat mounted on the frame,

a steering system enabling the operator to steer the lawn mower,

at least two side-by-side front rotary cutting deck assemblies mounted on the frame, the front deck assemblies defining a gap between adjacent front deck assemblies, and

at least one rear rotary cutting deck assembly mounted on the frame behind the front deck assemblies, each rear deck assembly being aligned with a respective gap between adjacent front deck assemblies,

each of the front and rear deck assemblies including a single-spindle cutting deck defining a downwardly opening space, a single spindle mounted for rotation about a generally vertical axis within the space, and at least one cutting blade mounted on the spindle for rotation therewith.

2. A lawn mower as set forth in claim 1 wherein the front deck assemblies are mounted on the frame in front of the front wheels, and the rear deck assembly is mounted on the frame behind the front wheels and in front of the rear wheels.

3. A lawn mower as set forth in claim 1 wherein each deck assembly also includes a rear roller supporting the associated deck for movement over the ground, and wherein the deck has a width such that the roller extends across substantially the entire width of the deck.

4. A lawn mower as set forth in claim 3 wherein each of the front and rear deck assemblies includes a pair of laterally-spaced, generally vertically-extending side plates having forward ends, a first front wheel supporting one of the side plates for movement over the ground, and a second front wheel supporting the other of the side plates for movement over the ground, wherein the rear roller extends between the side plates and supports the side plates for movement over the ground, wherein the associated deck is located between the side plates and in front of the roller and is mounted on the side plates such that the height of the deck relative to the ground is adjustable.

5. A lawn mower as set forth in claim 1 wherein each deck assembly also includes a hydraulic motor which is mounted on the deck and which is drivingly connected to the spindle.

6. A lawn mower as set forth in claim 1 wherein each deck assembly includes a set of cutting blades mounted on the spindle for rotation therewith, the set of blades including a lower, leading blade having a leading cutting edge and an upwardly angled trailing edge, and an upper, trailing blade having a leading cutting edge for cutting clippings deflected upwardly by the upwardly angled trailing edge of the leading blade, the trailing blade extending at a non-perpendicular angle relative to the leading blade so that clippings coming off the trailing edge of the leading blade are cut immediately by the trailing blade before the clippings start swirling around within the space.

7. A lawn mower as set forth in claim 1 wherein each deck assembly is connected to the frame by a cross member connected to the frame for pivotal movement about a generally vertical axis and about a generally horizontal axis extending in the forward-rearward direction, the cross member having opposite, laterally-spaced ends, one of the cross member ends being connected to one of the side plates of the associated deck assembly for pivotal movement about a generally horizontal, laterally-extending axis adjacent the forward ends of the side plates, and the other of the cross member ends being connected to the other of the side plates of the associated deck assembly for pivotal movement about the generally horizontal, laterally-extending axis.

8. A lawn mower as set forth in claim 7 wherein each of the deck assemblies is connected to the frame by a respective generally L-shaped, horizontally-extending arm having a laterally-extending inner leg with an inner end connected to the frame for pivotal movement about a generally horizontal axis extending in the forward-rearward direction, and the arm having an outer leg extending in the forward-rearward direction, the outer leg having an outer end, and wherein the cross member is mounted on the outer end of the outer leg.

9. A lawn mower as set forth in claim 8 wherein the arm is operable to lift the associated deck assembly relative to the frame.

10. A lawn mower as set forth in claim 1 wherein each deck assembly is connected to the frame by a respective lifting arm operable to lift the associated deck assembly relative to the frame, such that each of the deck assemblies is connected by its own lifting arm to the frame.

11. A rotary lawn mower comprising

a frame supported by wheels for movement over the ground,

a power source which is mounted on the frame and which drives at least two of the wheels,

an operator's seat mounted on the frame,

a steering system enabling the operator to steer the lawn mower, and

a rotary cutting deck assembly including a pair of laterally-spaced, generally vertically-extending side plates which have forward ends and which are supported for movement over the ground, a single-spindle cutting deck defining a downwardly opening space, the deck being located between the side plates and being mounted on the side plates such that the height of the deck relative to the ground is adjustable, a single spindle mounted for rotation about a generally vertical axis within the space, and at least one cutting blade mounted on the spindle for rotation therewith, the deck assembly being connected to the frame by a cross member connected to the frame for pivotal movement about a generally vertical axis and about a generally horizontal axis extending in the forward-rearward direction, the cross member having opposite, laterally-spaced ends, one of the cross member ends being connected to one of the side plates for pivotal movement about a generally horizontal, laterally-extending axis adjacent the forward ends of the side plates, and the other of the cross member ends being connected to the other

the side plates for pivotal movement about the generally horizontal, laterally-extending axis.

12. A lawn mower as set forth in claim 11 wherein the deck assembly is connected to the frame by a generally L-shaped, horizontally-extending arm having a laterally-extending inner leg with an inner end connected to the frame for pivotal movement about a generally horizontal axis extending in the forward-rearward direction, and the arm having an outer leg extending in the forward-rearward direction, the outer leg having an outer end, and wherein the cross member is mounted on the outer end of the outer leg.

13. A lawn mower as set forth in claim 12 wherein the arm is operable to lift the deck assembly relative to the frame.

14. A lawn mower as set forth in claim 11 wherein the deck assembly also includes a hydraulic motor which is mounted on the deck and which is drivingly connected to the spindle.

15. A lawn mower as set forth in claim 11 wherein the deck assembly includes a set of cutting blades mounted on the spindle for rotation therewith, the set of blades including a lower, leading blade having a leading cutting edge and an upwardly angled trailing edge, and an upper, trailing blade having a leading cutting edge for cutting clippings deflected upwardly by the upwardly angled trailing edge of the leading blade, the trailing blade extending at a non-perpendicular angle relative to the leading blade so that clippings coming off the trailing edge of the leading blade are cut immediately by the trailing blade before the clippings start swirling around within the space.

16. A lawn mower as set forth in claim 11 wherein the deck assembly also includes a first front wheel supporting one of the side plates for movement over the ground, a second front wheel supporting the other of the side plates for movement over the ground, and a rear roller extending between the side plates and supporting the side plates for movement over the ground, wherein the deck is located in front of the roller, and wherein the deck has a width such that the roller extends across substantially the entire width of the deck.

17. A lawn mower as set forth in claim 11 wherein the ends of the cross member have thereon respective downwardly extending arms, the arms having respective lower ends, the lower end of one of the arms being connected to one of the side plates for pivotal movement about the generally horizontal, laterally-extending axis, and the lower end of the other of the arms being connected to the other of the side plates for pivotal movement about the generally horizontal, laterally-extending axis.

18. A gang-type rotary lawn mower comprising

a frame,

a pair of front wheels supporting the frame for movement over the ground,

a pair of rear wheels supporting the frame for movement over the ground,

a power source which is mounted on the frame and which drives at least one of the pairs of wheels,

an operator's seat mounted on the frame,

a steering system enabling the operator to steer the lawn mower,

at least two side-by-side front rotary cutting deck assemblies mounted on the frame in front of the front wheels, the front deck assemblies defining a gap between adjacent front deck assemblies, and

at least one rear rotary cutting deck assembly mounted on the frame behind the front wheels and in front of the rear wheels, each rear deck assembly being aligned with a respective gap between adjacent front deck assemblies,

each of the front and rear deck assemblies including a pair of laterally-spaced, generally vertically-extending side plates having forward ends, a first front wheel supporting one of the side plates for movement over the ground, a second front wheel supporting the other of the side plates for movement over the ground, a rear roller extending between the side plates and supporting the side plates for movement over the ground, a

single-spindle cutting deck defining a downwardly opening space, the deck being located between the side plates and in front of the roller and being mounted on the side plates such that the height of the deck relative to the ground is adjustable, the deck having a width such that the roller extends across substantially the entire width of the deck, a single spindle mounted for rotation about a generally vertical axis within the space, at least one cutting blade mounted on the spindle for rotation therewith, and

each of the deck assemblies being connected to the frame by a respective generally V-shaped, horizontally-extending lifting arm operable to lift the associated deck assembly relative to the frame, such that each of the deck assemblies is connected by its own lifting arm to the frame, each arm having a laterally-extending inner leg with an inner end connected to the frame for pivotal movement about a generally horizontal axis extending in the forward-rearward direction, and each arm having an outer leg extending in the forward-rearward direction, the outer leg having an outer end, and a cross member mounted on the outer end of the outer leg for pivotal movement about a generally vertical axis and about a generally horizontal axis extending in the forward-rearward direction, the cross member having opposite, laterally-spaced ends, one of the cross member ends being connected to one of the side plates of the associated deck assembly for pivotal movement about a generally horizontal, laterally-extending axis adjacent the forward ends of the side plates, and the other of

the cross member ends being connected to the other of the side plates of the associated deck assembly for pivotal movement about the generally horizontal, laterally-extending axis.

19. A lawn mower as set forth in claim 18 wherein each deck assembly also includes a hydraulic motor which is mounted on the deck and which is drivingly connected to the spindle.

20. A lawn mower as set forth in claim 18 wherein each deck assembly includes a set of cutting blades mounted on the spindle for rotation therewith, the set of blades including a lower, leading blade having a leading cutting edge and an upwardly angled trailing edge, and an upper, trailing blade having a leading cutting edge for cutting clippings deflected upwardly by the upwardly angled trailing edge of the leading blade, the trailing blade extending at a non-perpendicular angle relative to the leading blade so that clippings coming off the trailing edge of the leading blade are cut immediately by the trailing blade before the clippings start swirling around within the space.

and 817

Declaration and Power of Attorney For Patent Application

As a below named inventor, I hereby declare that:

My residence, post office address and citizenship are as stated below next to my name.

I believe I am the original, first and sole inventor of the subject matter which is claimed and for which a patent is sought on the invention entitled "GANG-TYPE ROTARY LAWN MOWER" (Attorney Docket No. 78209/9009), the specification of which is attached hereto.

I hereby state that I have reviewed and understand the contents of the above identified specification, including the claims.

I acknowledge the duty to disclose to the Patent and Trademark Office all information known to me to be material to patentability as defined in Title 37, Code of Federal Regulations, §1.56.

And I hereby appoint JOSEPH A. GRIGNANI, (Reg. No. 19,482); ROBERT E. CLEMENCY (Reg. No. 19,287), DAVID B. SMITH (Reg. No. 27,595), GLENN A. BUGE (Reg. No. 24,217), FRED WIVIOTT (Reg. No. 19,158), DAVID R. PRICE (Reg. No. 31,557), ROBERT S. BRIGER (Reg. No. 28,687), HAYARD H. MICHAEL (Reg. No. 15,974), CASIMIR P. LASKA (Reg. No. 30,862), KENT S. BARTA (Reg. No. 29,042), DAVID L. DE BRUIN (Reg. No. 35,489), TIMOTHY M. KELLEY (Reg. No. 34,201), ELIZABETH HUNT SCHOETTLY (Reg. No. 36,922), BILLIE JEAN STRANDT (Reg. No. 36,940), THOMAS A. MILLER (Reg. No. 36,871), KEVIN P. MORAN (Reg. No. 37,193) and WITOLD A. ZIARNO (Reg. No. 39,888), 100 East Wisconsin Avenue, Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53202-4108, Telephone (414) 271-6560, and each or any of them, my attorneys or agents, with full power of substitution and revocation, to prosecute this application and to transact all business in the Patent and Trademark Office connected therewith.

ADDRESS ALL COMMUNICATIONS IN OR PERTAINING TO THIS APPLICATION TO:

David R. Price
MICHAEL, BEST & FRIEDRICH
100 East Wisconsin Avenue
Milwaukee, WI 53202-4108

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

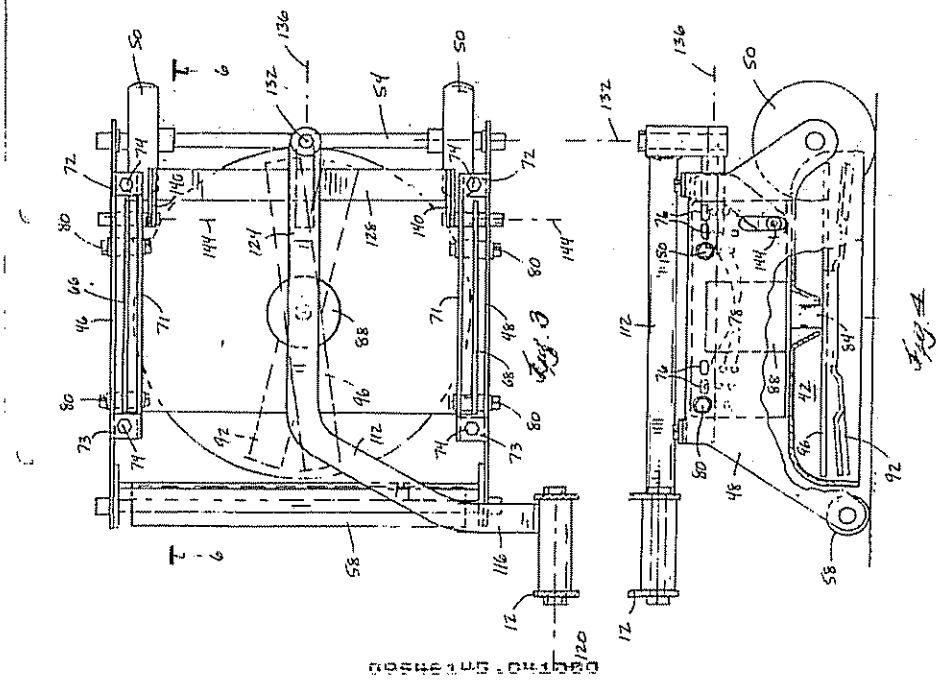
A gang-type rotary lawn mower including a frame supported by wheels for movement over the ground, a power source which is mounted on the frame and which drives at least two of the wheels, an operator's seat mounted on the frame, a steering system enabling the operator to steer the lawn mower, at least two side-by-side front rotary cutting deck assemblies mounted on the frame, the front deck assemblies defining a gap between adjacent front deck assemblies, and at least one rear rotary cutting deck assembly mounted on the frame behind the front deck assemblies, each rear deck assembly being aligned with a respective gap between adjacent front deck assemblies, each of the front and rear deck assemblies including a single-spindle mulching deck defining a downwardly opening space, a single spindle mounted for rotation about a generally vertical axis within the space, and at least one cutting blade mounted on the spindle for rotation therewith.

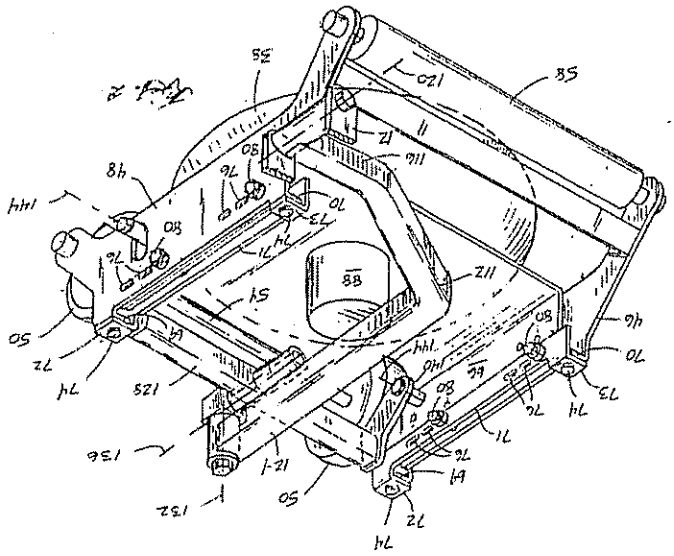
I hereby declare that all statements made herein of my own knowledge are true and that all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true; and further that these statements were made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both, under Section 1001 of Title 18 of the United States Code and that such willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the application or any patent issued thereon.

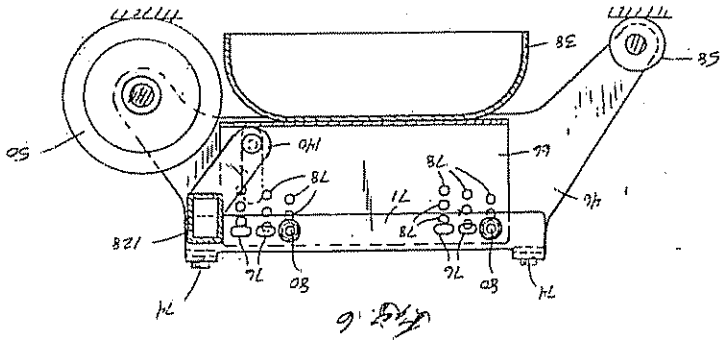
Full name of sole inventor: Richard D. Bednar

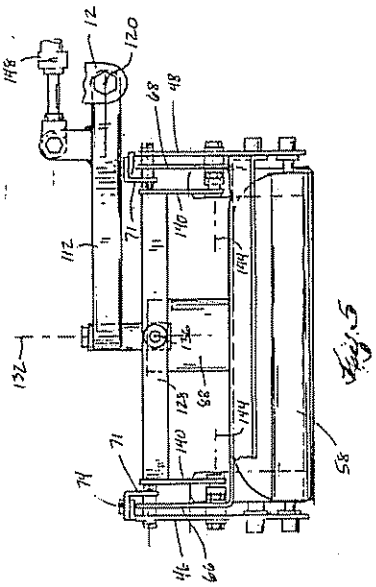
Inventor's signature _____ Date 1-31-97

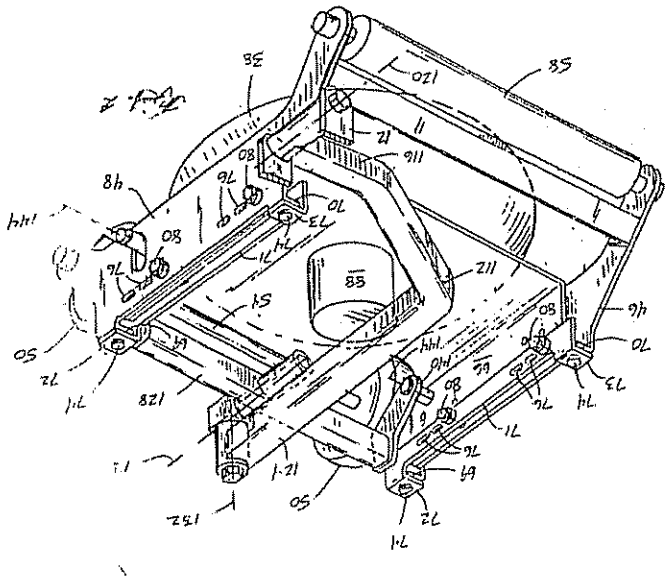
Residence: Lake Hills, Wisconsin
Citizenship: United States of America
Post Office Address: N6804 Shorewood Hills Rd.
Lake Hills, Wisconsin 53551

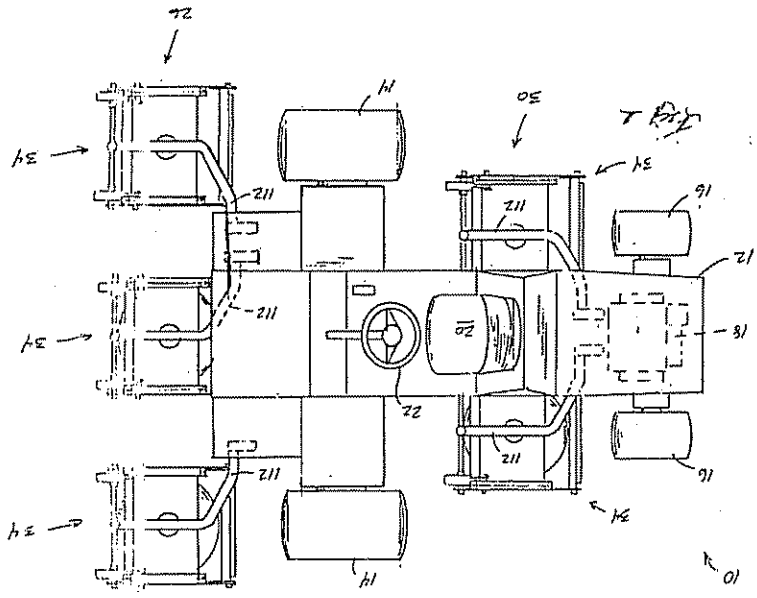


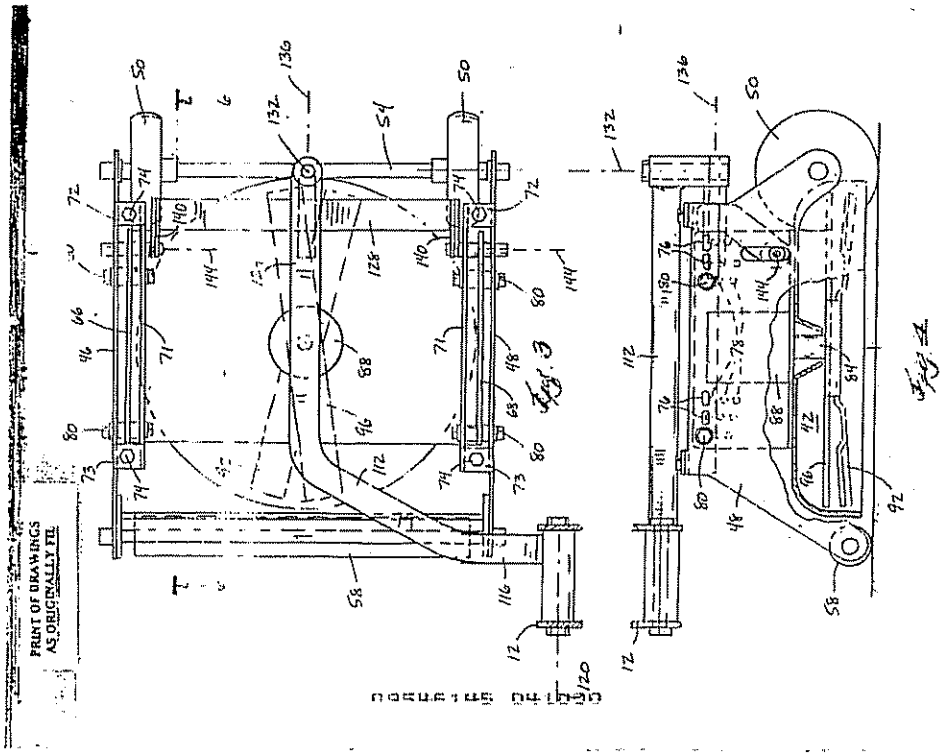


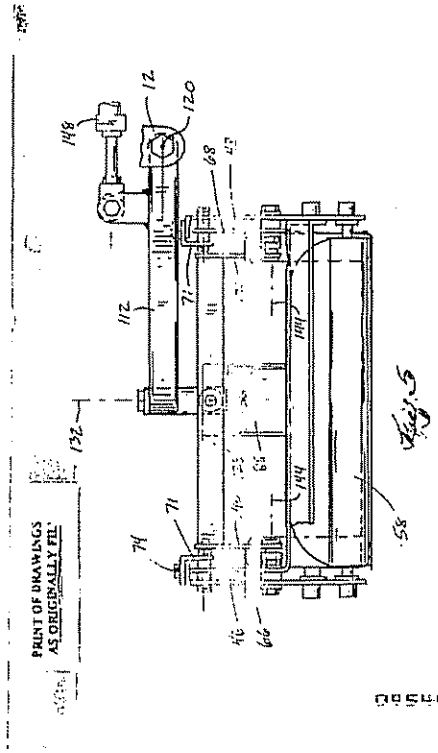












PRINT OF DRAWINGS
AS ORIGINALLY FILED

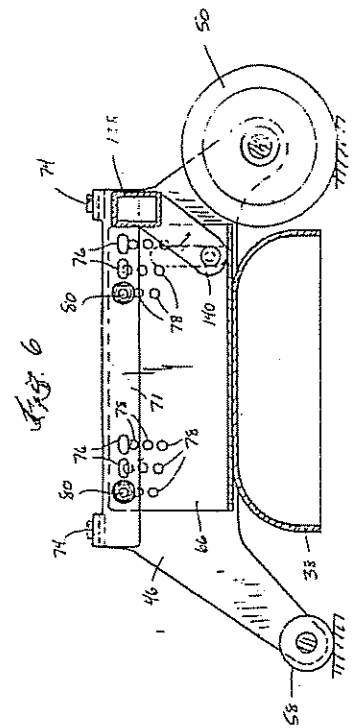


Fig. 6

4-11-00

#2/Rule A

NEW, CONTINUATION, DIVISIONAL OR CONTINUATION-IN-PART APPLICATION UNDER 37 C.F.R. §1.53(b)

Attorney Docket No. 7016R-000015/COA

Express Mail Label No. EJ948536840US

Date April 10, 2000

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Hon. Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks
Washington, D. C. 20231

Sir:

Transmitted herewith for filing under 37 C.F.R §1.53(b) is a patent application for

GANG-TYPE ROTARY LAWN MOWER

Identified by: [ ] First named Inventor
or [X] Attorney Docket No. (see above)

1. **Type of Application**

[ ] This application is a new (non-continuing) application.

[X] This application is a [X] continuation / [ ] divisional / [ ] continuation-in-part of prior application No. 08/794,141. Amend the specification by inserting before the first line the sentence:

--This is a continuation of United States patent application No. 08/794,141, filed February 3, 1997,-- now U.S. Patent 6,017,530 --

[X] The entire disclosure of the prior application, from which a copy of the oath or declaration is supplied, is considered part of the disclosure of the accompanying application and is hereby incorporated by reference therein.

If for some reason applicant has not requested a sufficient extension of time in the parent application, and/or has not paid a sufficient fee for any necessary response in the parent application and/or for the extension of time necessary to prevent the abandonment of the parent application prior to the filing of this application, please consider this as a Request for an Extension for the required time period and/or authorization to charge our Deposit Account No. 08-0750 for any fee that may be due. THIS FORM IS BEING FILED IN TRIPLICATE: one copy for this application; one copy for use in connection with the Deposit Account (if applicable); and one copy for the above-mentioned parent application (if any extension of time is necessary).

2. **Contents of Application**

a. Specification of 21 pages;
[ ] A microfiche computer program (Appendix);
[ ] A nucleotide and/or amino acid sequence submission;

[ ] Because the enclosed application is in a non-English language, a verified English translation [ ] is enclosed [ ] will be filed.

[x] Cancel original claims 2-20 of the prior application before calculating the filing fee. (At least one original independent claim must be retained for filing date purposes.)

b. [X] Drawings on 5 sheets;

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A

Attorney Docket No. 7016R-000109
Express Mail Label No. EJ 046538840US
Date April 10, 2000

c. [x] A signed Oath/Declaration [x] is enclosed / [ ] will be filed in accordance with 37 C.F.R. §1.53(f).

The enclosed Oath/Declaration is [ ] newly executed / [x] a copy from a prior application under 37 C.F.R. §1.63(d) / [ ] accompanied by a statement requesting the deletion of person(s) not inventors in the continuing application.

d. Fees

FILING FEE CALCULATION	Number Filed		Number Extra	Rate	Basic Fee $690.00
Total Claims	1 - 20 =		0 x	$18.00 =	$0.00
Independent Claims	1 - 3 =		0 x	$78.00 =	$0.00
Multiple Dependent Claim(s) Used				$260.00 =	
FILING FEE – NON-SMALL ENTITY					$690.00
FILING FEE - SMALL ENTITY: Reduction by 1/2 [ ] Verified Statement under 37 C.F.R. §1.27 is enclosed. [ ] Verified Statement filed in prior application.					
Assignment Recordal Fee ($40.00)					
37 C.F.R. §1.17(k) Fee (non-English application)					
TOTAL					$690.00

[x] A check is enclosed to cover the calculated fees. The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees that may be required, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 08-0750. A duplicate copy of this document is enclosed.

[ ] The calculated fees will be paid within the time allotted for completion of the filing requirements.

[ ] The calculated fees are to be charged to Deposit Account No. 08-0750. The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees that may be required, or credit any overpayment, to said Deposit Account. A duplicate copy of this document is enclosed.

3. Priority Information

[ ] Foreign Priority: Priority based on _____ Application No. _____, filed _____, is claimed.

[ ] A copy of the above referenced priority document [ ] is enclosed / [ ] will be filed in due course, pursuant to 35 U.S.C. §119(a)-(d).

[ ] Provisional Application Priority: Priority based on United States Provisional Application No. ____, filed ____, is claimed under 35 U.S.C. §119(e).

Attorney Docket No. 7016R-000109
Express Mail Label No. EJ046538840US
Date April 10, 2000

4. Other Submissions

[ ] A Preliminary Amendment is enclosed.

[ ] An Information Disclosure Statement, ____ sheets of PTO Form 1449, and ____ patent(s)/publications/documents are enclosed.

[ ] A power of attorney

[ ] is submitted [ ] with the new Oath/Declaration.

[ ] is of record in the prior application and [ ] is in the original papers / [ ] a copy is enclosed.

[x] An Assignment of the invention

[ ] is enclosed with a cover sheet pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §§3.11, 3.28 and 3.31.

[x] is of record in a prior application. The assignment is to Ransomes America Corporation, and is recorded at Reel ____, Frame(s) ____

[ ] An Establishment of Assignee's Right To Prosecute Application Under 37 C.F.R. §3.73(b), and Power Of Attorney is enclosed.

[x] An Express Mailing Certificate is enclosed.

[x] Other: Return Postcard; a Preliminary Amendment will follow.

Attention is directed to the fact that the correspondence address for this application is:

Harness, Dickey & Pierce, P.L.C.
P.O. Box 828
Bloomfield Hills, Michigan 48303
(248) 641-1600.

Respectfully,

Date 4/10/00
Harness, Dickey & Pierce, P.L.C.
P.O. Box 828
Bloomfield Hills, Michigan 48303
(248) 641-1600

David P. Utykanski
Reg. No. 39,052

GP3671

PATENT

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Group Art Unit:	To Be Assigned
Examiner:	To Be Assigned
Serial No.:	09/546,145
Inventor(s):	Richard D. Bednar
Filed:	April 10, 2000
For:	Gang-Type Rotary Lawn Mower
Attorney Docket:	7016R-000015/COA

INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

Hon. Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks
Washington, D.C. 20231

CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks, Washington, D.C. 20231 on 7/18/00

By David L. Ohyl

Sir:

Pursuant to 37 C.F.R. 1.97 and 1.98, Applicant(s) hereby submit(s) an Information Disclosure Statement for consideration by the Examiner.

I. LIST OF PATENTS, PUBLICATIONS OR OTHER INFORMATION

The patents, publications or other information submitted for consideration by the Office (except U.S. patent applications) are listed on PTO-1449, attached hereto.

II. COPIES

a.____ Submitted herewith is a legible copy of (i) each U.S. and foreign patent; (ii) each publication or that portion which caused it to be listed; and (iii) all other information or that portion which caused it to be listed, except that no copy of a U.S. patent application is included.

b.____ Any patents, publications or other information which are listed on PTO-1449 or on the copies of PTO-892 but which are not enclosed herewith were previously cited by or submitted to the PTO in one of the following applications which has been relied upon for an earlier filing date under 35 U.S.C. 120:

U.S. Serial Number U.S. Filing Date

III. CONCISE EXPLANATION OF THE RELEVANCE (check at least one box)

a. X Except as may be indicated below in (b), all of the patents, publications or other information are in the English language (concise explanation not required).

b. X A concise explanation of the relevance of all patents, publications or other information listed that is not in the English language is as follows: See English language abstract attached to the references as necessary.

c.____ The following additional information is provided for the Examiner's consideration.

IV. CROSS REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATION(S)

The Examiner is advised that the following co-pending application(s) contain(s) subject matter that may be related to the present application. By bringing this(these) applications to the Examiner's attention, Applicant(s) does(do) not waive the confidentiality provisions of 35 U.S.C. § 122.

Serial No. Filing Date Art Unit

V. THIS IDS IS BEING FILED UNDER 37 C.F.R. 1.97(b): (check one box)

a.____ within three months of the filing date of a national application (37 C.F.R. 1.97(b)(1)). No fee or certification is required.

b.____ within three months of the date of entry of the national stage as set forth in § 1.491 in an international application (37 C.F.R. 1.97(b)(2)). No fee or certification is required.

c. X before the mailing date of a first Action on the merits (37 C.F.R. 1.97(b)(3)). No fee or certification is required. In the event that a first Office Action on the merits has been issued, please consider this IDS under 37 C.F.R. 197(c) and see the certification under 37 C.F.R. 1.97(e) below, or, if no certification has been made, charge our deposit account a fee in the amount of $240.00 as required by 37 C.F.R. 1.17(p).

VI. THIS IDS IS BEING FILED UNDER 37 C.F.R. 1.97(c): (check one box)

before the mailing date of a Final Office Action under 37 C.F.R. 1.113 (See 37 C.F.R. 1.97(c)(1)) or before the mailing date of a Notice of Allowance under 37 C.F.R. 1.311 (See 37 C.F.R. 1.97(c)(2)).

a.____ No certification; therefore, a fee in the amount of $240.00 is required by 37 C.F.R. 1.17(p).

b.____ See the certification below. No fee is required.

VII. CERTIFICATION UNDER 37 C.F.R. 1.97(e) (check only one box)

The undersigned hereby certifies that

a.____ each item of information contained in the IDS was cited in a communication from a foreign or PCT Patent Office in a counterpart foreign or PCT application not more than three months prior to the filing of this IDS; or

b.____ no item of information contained in the IDS was cited in a communication from a foreign Patent Office in a counterpart foreign application or, to the best of my knowledge after making reasonable inquiry, was known to any individual designated in 37 C.F.R. 1.56(c) more than three months prior to the filing of this statement.

c.____ Some of the items of information were cited in a communication from a foreign Patent Office. As to this information, the undersigned certified that each item of information contained in the IDS was cited in a communication from a foreign Patent Office in a counterpart foreign application not more than three months prior to the filing of this IDS. As to the remaining information, the undersigned hereby certifies that no item of this remaining information contained in the IDS was cited in a communication from a foreign Patent Office in a counterpart foreign application or, to the best of my knowledge after making reasonable inquiry, was known to any individual designated in 37 C.F.R. 1.56(c) more than three months prior to the filing of this statement.

VIII. PAYMENT OF FEES (check one box)

_____ A check in the amount of $240.00 is enclosed for the above-identified fee.

_____ Please charge Deposit Account No. 08-0750 in the amount of $240.00 for the above-indicated fee. A triplicate copy of this paper is attached.

It is Applicant's opinion that the claims presently on file patentably distinguish the present invention from each of these references. The above references are being cited only in the interests of candor and without any admission that they constitute statutory prior art or contain matter which anticipates the invention or which would render the same obvious, either singly or in combination, to a person of ordinary skill in the art.

If the Examiner has any questions concerning this IDS, he/she is requested to contact the undersigned. If it is determined that this IDS has been filed under the wrong rule, the PTO is requested to consider this IDS under the proper rule (with a petition if necessary) and charge the appropriate fee to Deposit Account No. 08-0750.

Please charge any additional fees or credit any overpayment pursuant to 37 C.F.R. 1.16 or 1.17 to Deposit Account No. 08-0750.

Respectfully submitted,
HARNESS, DICKEY & PIERCE, P.L.C.

Date: 7/19/00

By: David P. Utykanski
David P. Utykanski
Reg. No. 39,052

Enclosures:
X PTO-1449
____ PTO-892
X References
____ Foreign Search Report
____ Fee
____ Other:

HARNESS, DICKEY & PIERCE, P.L.C.
P.O. Box 828
Bloomfield Hills, Michigan 48303
(248)641-1600

FORM HDP-1449 (Based on Form PTO-1449)	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	SERIAL NO. 09/546,145
PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE INFORMATION DISCLOSURE CITATION (Use several sheets if necessary) Sheet 1 of 2	7016R-000015/COA	
	APPLICANT: RICHARD D. BEDNAR	
	FILING DATE: APRIL 10, 2000	GROUP: ~~To Be Designated~~ 3671

OIPE JUL 24 2000 PATENT & TRADEMARK OFFICE

U.S. PATENT DOCUMENTS						
Ref. Desig.	Examiner's Initials	Document Number	Date	Name	Class/ Subclass	(If appropriate) Filing Date
1.	CR	1,901,710	June 1934	Pol		
2.		2,504,259	April 1950	Ford		
3.		2,936,561	May, 1960	Grimes		
4.		3,079,938	Jan. 1963	Wingel		
5.		3,118,266	Jan. 1964	Coburn		
6.		3,135,079	June 1964	Dunn		
7.		4,398,713	Jan. 1982	James		
8.		4,901,507	Feb. 1990	Cracraft		
9.		5,137,100	Aug. 1992	Scott et al.		
10.		5,280,695	Jan. 1994	Nunes, Jr., et al.		
11.		5,293,729	March 1994	Curry et al.		
12.		5,297,376	March 1994	Smith		
13.		5,343,680	Sept. 1994	Reichen et al.		
14.		5,355,665	Oct. 1994	Peter		
15.		5,412,932	May 1995	Schuster.		
16.		5,423,565	June 1995	Smith		
17.		5,481,857	Jan. 1996	Umemoto et al.		
18.		5,497,604	March 1996	Lonn		
19.	CR	6,047,530	April 2000	Bednar		

Examiner:	Date Considered:
Rizzuto	10/19/00

EXAMINER: Please initial if citation considered, whether or not citation is in conformance with MPEP 609. Draw line through citation if not in conformance and not considered. Include copy of this form with next communication to applicant.

OIPE JUL 24 2000 PATENT & TRADEMARK OFFICE

FORM HDP-1449 (Based on Form PTO-1449)	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	SERIAL NO. 09/546,145
PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE INFORMATION DISCLOSURE CITATION (Use several sheets if necessary) Sheet 2 of 2	7016R-000015/COA	
	APPLICANT: RICHARD D. BEDNAR	
	FILING DATE: APRIL 10, 2000	GROUP: TO BE DESIGNATED 3671

FOREIGN PATENT DOCUMENTS							
Ref. Desig.	Examiner's Initials	Document Number	Date	Country	Class/ Subclass	Yes	No
1.	CR	7,804,519	Aug. 1978	NL			
2.	CR	88/05996	Aug. 1988	WO			
3.	CR	0,342,700	Nov. 1989	EP			

OTHER DOCUMENTS (Including Author, Title, Date, Pertinent Pages, etc.)		
Ref. Desig.	Examiner's Initials	
1.	CR	Mountfield "Domestic Grass Machinery" (Date unknown).
2.	CR	Turf Blazer 1040 Diesel, Howard Price Turf Equipment (advertising brochure) (Date unknown).
3.	CR	Nunes Rotary Mower, John Deere 3364 Deck Attachment; Nunes Manufacturing, Inc. 6/1973

Examiner:	Date Considered:
Rizzuto	10/19/00

EXAMINER: Please initial if citation considered, whether or not citation is in conformance with MPEP 609. Draw line through citation if not in conformance and not considered. Include copy of this form with next communication to applicant.